

What is Modality: Obligation and Permission?

Worksheet

Modality expresses obligation and permission using modal verbs. 'Must' and 'should' express obligation; 'can,' 'may,' and 'could' express permission. These verbs modify the necessity or permissibility of actions.

Questions

1. Which modal expresses the strongest obligation?
A) can
B) should
C) must
D) may
2. 'You may not park here.' This expresses:
A) permission
B) prohibition
C) advice
D) possibility
3. Which sentence correctly uses an obligation modal?
A) You can finish your work.
B) You may finish your work.
C) You should finish your work.
D) All are correct, but 'should' is strongest.
4. 'Must not' vs 'don't have to'—what's the difference?
A) No difference
B) 'Must not' forbids; 'don't have to' means it is optional
C) They mean the same thing
D) 'Must not' is weaker
5. You must submit the assignment by Friday.
6. You should arrive early to the meeting.
7. You may use a dictionary during the exam.
8. Define: What modal expresses strong obligation?
9. Define: Difference between 'must' and 'should'?
10. Define: Which modals express permission?

Answer Key

1. C) must — 'Must' is non-negotiable obligation. 'Should' is weaker; 'can' and 'may' are permissions.
2. B) prohibition — 'May not' forbids the action—it is a prohibition.
3. C) You should finish your work. — 'Should' expresses expectation or mild obligation. 'Can' and 'may' are permissions.
4. B) 'Must not' forbids; 'don't have to' means it is optional — 'Must not' is prohibition; 'don't have to' means something is not required but permitted.
5. 'Must' expresses strong obligation—submission is required and non-negotiable. This is the strongest form of obligation.
6. 'Should' expresses mild obligation or advice—arriving early is recommended but not strictly required. It is weaker than 'must.'
7. 'May' grants permission formally. It indicates that using a dictionary is allowed and permitted by authority.
8. 'Must' expresses the strongest obligation—something is absolutely required.
9. 'Must' is obligatory; 'should' is recommended or expected but not strictly required.
10. 'Can' and 'may'—'may' is more formal; 'can' is more casual.

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